Building the Workforce through Implementation of a Telephone Health Coaching Intervention

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Purpose
To adapt and implement the ACTIVATE intervention for use by the health technicians at the Behavioral Telehealth Center (BTC). Implementation Plan: External facilitation (process of interactive problem solving and support, Stetler et al., 2006) with an implementation booster.

Introduction: ACTIVATE ("A Coaching by Telephone Intervention for Veterans and Care Team Engagement") Two key components: 1. Online health risk assessment 2. Telephone coaching calls to engage patients in smoking cessation and weight loss programs Implementation Site: VA VISN2 Behavioral Telehealth Center (BTC) Call center delivering telehealth behavior programs to Upstate New York VA primary care patients.

Evaluation
What is a health technician?
• Paraprofessional: No formal training requirement; only training specific to work area and duties
• Scope includes providing general health education and coaching but not assessment, treatment, or diagnosis

What is ACTIVATE work?
• Compared to Veterans completing the health risk assessment alone, Veterans receiving the full ACTIVATE intervention demonstrated significantly higher rates of enrollment in a prevention program, program participation, and patient activation

What kinds of tools and strategies did you use?
• Clinical practice tools: an information sheet about the health risk assessment, detailed scripts for calls 1-3, bulleted call outline, note templates, sample health risk assessment report for guidance
• Implementation tools: call flow diagram, road maps for calls 1 and 2, role play coaching form
• External facilitation was informed by i-PARIHS: implementation depends on context, innovation, recipient, and facilitation
• Facilitation Strategies used: stakeholder engagement, program adaptation, assessment, education, process monitoring, problem identification/solving, training, providing resources, supporting staff, implementation checklist, needs assessment, meeting facilitation, process mapping

What adaptations were made?
• Used health technicians instead of trained health coaches
• A call and additional scripted language was added to invite Veterans to participate and introduce the health risk assessment
• Because Veterans were calling a hotline to enroll in a program, sections about enrolling in programs were moved and changed (e.g., health behavior program enrollment was moved to the first call)
• Patients were only enrolling in VA programs
• The coaching call was condensed by eliminating some advanced coaching elements (e.g., setting SMART goals)

What was the feedback?
• Examples of Veteran feedback: "The first couple of calls kept me motivated." "Knowing the support I could expect from the program helped." "It is something I will be using... it's a handy tool" "Fits really nicely with the workflow", very clear "The more that I do it, I become more comfortable" "Room to make it my own"

What does ACTIVATE mean?
• Program enrollment for Veterans calling in during the first 7 months of ACTIVATE implementation was significantly different than the comparable time period from the prior year (91%), \( y^2 = 2.48, p > .10\)
• Program completion for Veterans calling in during the first 7 months of ACTIVATE implementation (79%) was not significantly different than the comparable time period from the prior year (80%), \( y^2 = 0.06, p > .75\)

Just the facts please! What are your results based on?
Reach
1. Veterans who spoke with a health technician, 319 (95%) were offered the ACTIVATE intervention.
2. Of 31% Veterans who spoke with a health technician, 319 (95%) were offered the ACTIVATE intervention.
3. Of 335 Veterans who spoke with a health technician, 319 (95%) were offered the ACTIVATE intervention.
4. Of 335 Veterans who spoke with a health technician, 319 (95%) were offered the ACTIVATE intervention.

Effectiveness
• Program enrollment for Veterans calling in during the first 7 months of ACTIVATE implementation was significantly different than the comparable time period from the prior year (91%), \( y^2 = 2.48, p > .10\)
• Program completion for Veterans calling in during the first 7 months of ACTIVATE implementation (79%) was not significantly different than the comparable time period from the prior year (80%), \( y^2 = 0.06, p > .75\)

Maintenance
Rates of Veterans Being Offered, Opting In, and Completing Over the Implementation Period

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Health technicians can provide brief telephone coaching to promote and support patients taking an online health risk assessment.